United Nations A/73/343

General Assembly

Distr.: General
27 August 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Item 75 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/132, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to improve the international response to natural disasters and to report thereon to the Assembly at its seventy-third session. The report provides an overview of current efforts and progress made in this regard and discusses related trends, challenges and thematic issues. It concludes with recommendations for further improvements.

* A/73/150.

18-14051 (E) 180918

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I. Year in review

A. Disaster data for 2017

1. For 2017, the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters registered 335 reported disasters, which caused an estimated 9,697 deaths, affected 95.6 million people and caused $334.1 billion in damage.[1] The number of deaths and the number of affected people were lower than the annual average for the past 10 years, partially owing to improved disaster risk management. However, 2017 was the second most economically costly year on record, with major hurricanes, monsoon floods in the Indian subcontinent and a severe drought in parts of Eastern Africa, which were responsible for most of the human and economic losses. In many of the affected countries, the impacts of these disasters will be long-lasting, hindering and reversing progress towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and requiring years of recovery and reconstruction.

2. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre estimates that more than 18.8 million people were newly displaced by disasters in 135 countries and territories in 2017, disproportionately affecting countries with a high disaster risk in South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific. Weather-related disasters caused most of the new displacements, with floods displacing 8.6 million people and tropical storms leaving 7.5 million in need of shelter. More than half — 9.9 million — of the new displacements associated with disasters were triggered by just 10 events. Between 2008 and 2017, 246.4 million people were displaced by sudden-onset disasters, an average of 24.6 million people per year.[2]

3. The World Meteorological Organization reported that 2017 was one of the three warmest years on record and the warmest without the presence of an El Niño event. The year continued the dire trend of global warming, the world's nine warmest years having all occurred since 2005.[3]

4. Globally, severe and acute food insecurity and malnutrition continued to worsen dramatically. In 2017, 124 million people suffered from acute food insecurity and required urgent humanitarian assistance, an increase from 108 million people in 2016 and from 80 million people in 2015. This increase is mainly due to protracted and intensified conflict, displacement and consecutive poor harvests caused by persistent drought in countries in Eastern and Southern Africa already facing high levels of food insecurity. Drought and other weather-related events were major triggers of food crises in 23 countries and pushed over 39 million people into acute food insecurity, of whom almost 32 million were in Africa.[4]

B. Overview of disasters associated with natural hazards in 2017

5. Although the El Niño event that began in 2015 ended in May 2016, its effects continued into 2017 in many countries and regions. In Southern Africa, where an estimated 32 million people were food insecure between June 2016 and March 2017, including 18.6 million people who required humanitarian assistance, cyclones and

[1] Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, Emergency Events Database. Available at www.emdat.be (accessed on 27 July 2018). The data used for the purposes of the present report exclude epidemics and insect infestations.

[2] Chloe Sydney and others, "Global report on internal displacement 2018" (Geneva, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2018).

[3] World Meteorological Organization (WMO), *WMO Statement on the State of the Global Climate in 2017* (Geneva, 2018).

[4] Food Security Information Network, "Global Report on Food Crises 2018" (2018).

floods destroyed lives and livelihoods and damaged infrastructure, houses and property across the region. Flooding that started in late 2016 had affected more than a million people by May 2017. In February, Tropical Cyclone Dineo affected 551,000 people in Mozambique, while Tropical Cyclone Enawo affected 434,000 people in Madagascar in March. In West Africa, a landslide caused more than 1,100 deaths in Sierra Leone.

6. In the Horn of Africa, humanitarian needs remained high, with 8.5 million severely food insecure people in Ethiopia by the end of 2017 owing to the lingering impact of the El Niño event and the onset of a new drought affecting parts of the country. Severe drought affected parts of Kenya, with some 5.6 million people needing humanitarian assistance, including 3.4 million food insecure people. Drought undermined people's livelihoods, exhausted coping capacities and led to widespread crop failure, water shortages and declining animal productivity and terms of trade for pastoralists, with a devastating impact on food security, nutrition and livelihoods. In Somalia, between December 2016 and June 2017, more than half of the cropland was affected by drought and herds were reduced by up to 60 per cent.

7. In 2017, more than 66 million people were affected by disasters in Asia and the Pacific. Severe flooding in Bangladesh, India and Nepal affected an estimated 40 million people, causing more than 1,200 deaths, displacing 1.9 million people and destroying crops and infrastructure. In Myanmar, monsoon floods displaced over 320,000 people. In Bangladesh, Tropical Cyclone Mora affected 3.3 million people, displacing 478,000 and leaving 540,000 in need of humanitarian assistance, including 300,000 Rohingya refugees who were living in camps in Cox's Bazaar at the time of the disaster. In the Philippines, where disasters affected over 3 million people, Tropical Storm Kai-Tak displaced 764,000 people and Tropical Storm Tembin displaced 435,000 people. Typhoon Damrey hit Viet Nam and caused flooding in 15 provinces, affecting more than 4.3 million people at the peak of the disaster, with nearly 400,000 requiring humanitarian assistance. In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, drought reduced crop yields and affected 11 million people. In Vanuatu, Tropical Cyclone Donna affected three provinces. In Solomon Islands, three disasters disrupted basic services and damaged infrastructure.

8. The 2017 Atlantic hurricane season was extremely destructive, with 17 named storms, including a number of major hurricanes, many of which occurred in quick succession. In September, three category 5 hurricanes swept through the Caribbean, devastating the lives of millions of people and leaving hundreds of thousands homeless and displaced. Many affected and displaced communities have yet to recover and rebuild their lives, livelihoods and homes.

9. In the Latin America and Caribbean region, extreme rainfall led to severe flooding in Peru, affecting 1.1 million people; earthquakes in Mexico killed 467 people and affected over 1.4 million; and a mudslide in Mocoa, Colombia, killed 329 people, injured 332 more and left many others missing.

C. Funding trends related to disasters in 2017

10. A total of $330.7 million was reported to the Financial Tracking Service of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in response to emergencies classified as disasters. Of that figure, a total of $121 million was reported in response to floods, cyclones and hurricanes in the Caribbean region and in Madagascar, Mozambique and Peru. In addition, $209.7 million was reported to address the consequences of the drought in Kenya. Funding was also allocated to drought-related programming as part of the famine response and prevention efforts in north-eastern Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen.

11. The Central Emergency Response Fund allocated $418.2 million in 2017. This included $140 million, or 33 per cent, for operations triggered by climate-related disasters, namely: $91.7 million to address urgent needs caused by drought; $28.3 million to address immediate needs caused by cyclones, typhoons and hurricanes; $19 million for efforts to respond to floods and landslides; and $1 million for efforts to respond to the effects of extreme temperatures.

12. In response to the unprecedented devastation caused by major hurricanes across the Caribbean region, humanitarian actors launched a response plan of $27.1 million for 265,000 people. Under a plan of action for Cuba, $55.8 million was sought for 2.15 million people. A flash appeal for Dominica was launched to raise $32 million to help 65,000 people. The international community provided funding and other support for the response efforts. The Central Emergency Response Fund allocated $11 million to kick start relief efforts across the Caribbean. To support post-hurricane recovery and reconstruction, Member States pledged $1.3 billion in aid and more than $1 billion in loans and debt relief at a donors' conference in November 2017.

II. Progress in strengthening disaster preparedness, response and resilience

A. Lessons learned from the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season and opportunities to improve future preparedness and response

13. While early warning systems and early action saved lives and ensured access to essential services, local responders and response mechanisms were also critical in the timely response to the hurricanes in the Caribbean region in 2017. In Cuba, preparedness measures enabled the evacuation of 1.9 million people. In Barbuda, the entire population of about 1,600 people was evacuated prior to the landfall of Hurricane Jose, following the extensive destruction already caused by Hurricane Irma. These measures were possible thanks to effective collaboration between national, regional and international disaster coordination structures and response mechanisms. The response also provided an opportunity to strengthen cooperation between the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency and international actors, including in strengthening operational readiness and early warning systems for future disasters.

14. The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency deployed more than 90 experts to undertake search and rescue operations, damage and needs assessments and relief operations, and sought international support to meet critical needs. United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination and surge teams were predeployed in the region to strengthen disaster response coordination, civil-military coordination and information management efforts. The timely availability of assessment data, including through satellite imagery, contributed to a swift and targeted response.

15. The hurricane season provided lessons for strengthening preparedness and response. Improved policies and capacities are required to strengthen resilience and preparedness for response and recovery at the national and local levels, including the development, funding and implementation of contingency plans. Strengthened regional capacities are needed to support countries that have not typically been affected by hurricanes and may therefore lack sufficient capacity. Local and community actors should be trained to take preventive and protective measures. Humanitarian actors must ensure strong coordination in order to reach affected populations and assess their needs. Communication and messaging should be appropriate, accessible and context-specific, tailored to communities and vulnerable groups. Access to the latest reliable baseline data should be improved in order to

effectively inform risk analysis and vulnerability assessments. Investment in risk-informed reconstruction, sustainable development and resilient infrastructure, supported by improved access to concessional loans and risk financing, are additional ways to reduce vulnerabilities to future natural hazards.

B. Disasters, agriculture and food security

16. Disasters often have long-lasting consequences owing to the loss of harvests and livestock, the outbreak of disease and the destruction of rural infrastructure and irrigation systems, affecting agricultural growth, rural livelihoods and ultimately national economies.

17. A review of 74 assessments conducted following disasters in 53 developing countries between 2006 and 2016 shows that 23 per cent of the total damage and loss caused by disasters — 83 per cent in the case of drought — in developing countries was absorbed by the agriculture sector, which includes crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture. Between 2005 and 2015, approximately $96 billion was lost due to declines in crop and livestock production following disasters in developing countries. About 75 per cent of the world's poor, most of them smallholder producers, reside in rural areas and are particularly hard hit by disasters and the resulting direct economic losses.[5] A better understanding of disaster impacts on agriculture and their wider implications for livelihoods is required to inform good agricultural practices, planning, budgeting and decision-making processes that incorporate disaster and climate-related risks.

18. The current rise in acute hunger reflects the increase in the number of people affected by conflict and disasters, underlying poverty and vulnerability and underinvestment in food security. As planting times for agricultural seasons are missed and livelihoods abandoned, humanitarian needs increase. Ensuring access to affected populations is critical in order to reach them and address their food security and other humanitarian needs. Investing in agriculture and addressing the root causes of vulnerability that lead to food insecurity and malnutrition are also essential in building resilience and reducing humanitarian needs and the cost of response in the future.

19. Social protection and safety nets are key to ensuring predictable support for building resilience at the household and community levels. Humanitarian actions should link into national mechanisms and join up with development programming to ensure that they can be scaled up quickly in the event of disasters, including through measures combining cash transfers with the provision of productive assets, inputs and training aimed at enhancing the livelihoods and productive capacities of poor and vulnerable households.

20. Effective preparedness, early warning systems and early action are essential in reducing the impacts of drought and other disasters. Heeding early warning signals with robust risk management measures can stop disasters from becoming catastrophes for smallholder producers and rural communities. Preliminary impact assessment results indicate that, in Kenya, early animal feed distribution to herders proved cost-effective. For every $1 invested, households received a benefit of $3.50 resulting from lower animal mortality, improved animal body conditions and increased milk production. In Somalia, 3 million families benefited from a programme to treat 22 million animals against diseases and to keep them alive and productive during the

[5] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), *The Impact of Disasters and Crises on Agriculture and Food Security 2017* (Rome, 2018).

drought. At a cost of $0.40 per animal, the treatment was 100 times more cost-effective than replacing a dead animal ($40).[6]

C. Advancing humanitarian and development collaboration

21. The challenges posed by increasingly severe and recurring disasters necessitate closer humanitarian and development collaboration. It is critical to articulate and operationalize collective humanitarian-development outcomes aimed at reducing need, risk and vulnerability.

22. To promote greater coherence in humanitarian and development action, the Secretary-General created the Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration to resolve operational, institutional and systemic barriers and to provide strategic advice, support and solutions for country-level leadership, including resident coordinators, humanitarian coordinators, United Nations country teams and humanitarian country teams. The repositioning of the United Nations development system will provide stronger results, so as "to reach the furthest behind first", and positions the development system to better reduce need, risk and vulnerability related to disasters and climate change.

23. Collective outcomes have been increasingly integrated into planning processes at the country level. In Somalia, the drought impact and needs assessment identifies the root causes and impacts of recurrent drought and informs the resilience and recovery framework, which is aimed at preventing future droughts from becoming major humanitarian crises. The framework joins up with the multi-year humanitarian response plan in pursuit of collective outcomes, including a reduction in the proportion of the population affected by climate-induced hazards by 25 per cent by 2022. In Burkina Faso, a collective outcome embedded in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework focuses on reducing the number of households vulnerable to climate shocks. In Mauritania, the partnership framework for sustainable development includes a collective outcome on anticipating and responding to crises and the effects of climate change.

24. More humanitarian and development collaboration is required to strengthen resilience. As 68 per cent of the world population is projected to live in urban areas by 2050, strengthening urban resilience in line with the New Urban Agenda is essential. Small island developing States are particularly vulnerable to, and disproportionately affected by, disasters and climate change and therefore require additional support.

D. Anticipating disasters and strengthening preparedness and early action in vulnerable countries

25. Key multi-stakeholder initiatives and inter-agency approaches continue to systematically strengthen the level of preparedness in hazard-prone countries. By the end of 2017, the Emergency Response Preparedness approach of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee was being implemented in 73 (or 96 per cent) of priority countries. The aim was to enhance an understanding of the risks, establish a minimum level of preparedness and take further steps to ensure response readiness, with the objective of increasing the speed and volume of life-saving assistance delivered in the first weeks of an emergency. The Committee is currently enhancing its approach by strengthening the operational focus and linkages with development, prevention

[6] FAO, *Horn of Africa: Impact of Early Warning Early Action* (Rome, 2018).

and mitigation activities, and by enabling humanitarian country teams to seek anticipatory financing.

26. The Committee has developed standard operating procedures to catalyse early warning into early action for extreme weather events related to the El Niño-Southern Oscillation. The procedures build on and complement the blueprint for action prepared by the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General on El Niño and Climate. They were developed to address the lessons learned during the most recent El Niño event and to provide a structured framework to initiate early action at all levels by outlining triggers and stating when and by whom corresponding actions need to be taken once there are warning signs of a possible or impending El Niño or La Niña event. In the first application of the procedures in 2016 and 2017, the Committee, through its global analytical cell of climate, humanitarian and development experts, assessed forecasts, alerted 19 identified high-risk countries and offered support in planning and implementing early action in response.

27. The Global Preparedness Partnership became operational in 2017, including nationally led diagnostic reviews to identify gaps in preparedness capacities for response and recovery and support requirements to address them. To provide predictable funding for a coherent preparedness approach, a multi-partner trust fund has been established, under the Partnership, to support 15 hazard-prone countries in attaining a minimum level of preparedness by 2020.

28. The Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems initiative is aimed at significantly increasing the capacity of least developed countries and small island developing States to generate and communicate multi-hazard early warnings and risk information. In 2017, the initiative assisted 19 Governments in the Pacific and Africa in improving their early warning systems and capacity so that warnings reach people exposed to hazards with targeted and actionable risk information. In 2017, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported over 90 ongoing early warning programmes globally, including in Asia and the Pacific, where the "#90drills" project raised awareness and fostered tsunami preparedness in 90 schools in 18 countries.

29. In 2017, the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative delivered capacity-development services in seven countries. Assessments of national and local systems and capacities to reduce disaster risk across various socioeconomic sectors were conducted in Jordan and Zimbabwe and support for the development of national strategies for disaster risk management were provided in Georgia and Serbia. In addition, United Nations entities, the World Bank and the European Union supported the work of 11 countries in conducting post-disaster assessments and developing recovery frameworks, policies and institutions and provided seven national and regional training courses for over 300 government officials.

30. Demonstrating its invaluable role in sudden-onset emergencies, the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team has been deployed to more than 281 missions in over 110 countries since it was founded in 1993. In 2017, the Team was deployed to 13 disaster response missions, the largest being in response to Hurricane Irma, in addition to carrying out activities aimed at improving national and regional preparedness.

31. The Global Crisis Centre Network, established as a community of practice for national and regional crisis centres, supports the exchange and analysis of information among international actors following sudden-onset disasters. In 2017, the Network developed draft standard operating procedures for its activation and operations, which were tested in multiple simulation exercises. Building on lessons learned, the Network aims to be ready for activation in the event of disasters in 2018.

32. Partnerships with the private sector were strengthened in 2017. UNDP and the Deutsche Post DHL Group supported training programmes in 10 countries as part of the "Get Airports Ready for Disaster" initiative to develop the capacity of airports to prepare for logistical challenges, avoid bottlenecks during major disasters and ensure that relief supplies reach affected people on time. By the end of 2017, 13 business networks were operational worldwide as part of the Connecting Business initiative, which strengthens the resilience of businesses and their engagement before, during and after disasters. During the course of 2017, eight networks responded to disasters, working alongside national and international actors in assisting communities, organizing information campaigns and rebuilding critical infrastructure.

33. Strong legal and institutional preparedness is essential for affected States that are likely to require international disaster assistance. The year 2017 marked the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance. So far, 30 countries have adopted legal instruments based on these recommendations and a dozen more have pending drafts. The Guidelines have informed three new regional treaties, and new tools were developed in 2017 to support States in reviewing and strengthening relevant domestic legal frameworks, including: (a) a model emergency decree developed by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs as a reference tool for situations where a clear legal framework is not in place before the onset of large-scale disasters; and (b) the IFRC Checklist on the Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance, developed to support self-assessments of existing national provisions against the recommendations set out in the Guidelines. Despite such progress, recent large-scale disasters demonstrate that efforts should continue in order to support Member States in strengthening legal preparedness and developing laws, rules and procedures to address common regulatory bottlenecks and problems related to incoming international humanitarian assistance.

E. Financing for anticipatory approaches

34. The humanitarian sector has never been more effective, efficient, accountable and influential, mobilizing more money than ever before and reaching tens of millions of vulnerable people every year. Nevertheless there is scope to improve the global humanitarian response system. Although early warning systems, weather forecasts and related communications have improved in recent years, they have not always led to early action because of a lack of predictable and readily available resources, ineffective decision-making and other internal and system-level inefficiencies. Slow financial and programmatic responses to past disasters, both sudden- and slow-onset, have hampered the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian assistance, contributed to increased needs on the ground and, ultimately, to costlier responses than if action had been taken earlier.

35. The humanitarian funding architecture should more systematically incentivize and enable early action. Too often, the world has watched disasters and tragedy unfold, before gradually mobilizing funding for the response. *With the adverse effects* of climate change already a grim reality for many countries, the humanitarian system needs to adopt an anticipatory approach that is less reliant on slow financial and programmatic responses, including global appeals. It should invest in preparedness, put the response plans and required funding in place before disasters strike and release funds and mobilize responders as soon as they are needed. Planning in advance to ensure an immediate response will reduce the impact of disasters and potential humanitarian needs.

36. The humanitarian system should continue to develop innovative financing approaches in this regard and should experiment and test innovations to demonstrate the benefits of anticipatory, data-driven models of allocating funding. Humanitarian actors are already taking promising steps towards the adoption of anticipatory financing approaches and innovative financing and insurance solutions. There is an increase in trigger-based funding mechanisms built on pre-established thresholds linked to scientific indicators. When the thresholds are met, and disasters are likely or imminent, the mechanisms systematically and automatically disburse pre-agreed finance allocations from dedicated funds, windows, insurance policies and contingent funding pools for pre-agreed plans that outline specific early actions. Successfully implemented, the mechanisms can help to prevent full-blown crises from developing.

37. Working with its partners, IFRC continues to promote and expand the coverage of forecast-based financing. In 2017, national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies initiated early actions on the basis of forecasts in Bangladesh, Mongolia and Togo. IFRC has established a dedicated forecast-based financing mechanism as part of its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund, providing a vehicle to support forecast-based action. The mechanism supports national societies and focuses on funding predefined early action protocols that are triggered by hazards that can be scientifically forecast on the basis of hydrometeorological risk data and observations. The mechanism provides a predictable, immediate and sustainable supply of funding for early action that overcomes the restrictions that annual humanitarian aid budgets may impose on projects in terms of flexibility, scale and accessibility.

38. The World Food Programme (WFP) is currently implementing forecast-based financing in 11 countries prone to recurrent climate-related hazards and is collaborating with national and local partners to determine early warning indicators and thresholds for early action. WFP partners with the International Research Institute for Climate and Society and national hydrometeorological services to strengthen forecasting capacities and integrate their early warning systems into national preparedness and early action plans. A return on investment study on implementing the approach in Nepal found cost savings of $22 million when responding to an emergency affecting 175,000 people.

39. In response to the El Niño event that ended in 2016, the Central Emergency Response Fund provided approximately $119 million to 19 countries. An independent review confirmed the significant value added of the Fund's contribution to meeting humanitarian needs. While the Fund's contribution was part of the first international funding made available for the response, the review concluded that the impact could have been greater had the Fund responded sooner. The review recommended that the Fund should systematically provide funding for early action based on early warning information. The potential expanded role of the Fund in contributing to early action in the context of its $1 billion funding target will be explored during 2018.

40. Strong data and predictive analysis play a key role in developing effective triggers for early action and further efforts are needed to increase their generation and utilization. Information used to trigger early action needs to be objective, relevant and actionable. The forecast-based financing model of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to mitigate the impact of drought on pastoralists in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia used triggers based on an analysis of socioeconomic, health and climate indicators, including on milk production, stunting rates in children, pasture coverage and soil moisture levels. This analysis of evolving needs and vulnerability helped to inform cost-efficient early interventions with considerable cash benefits for pastoralist households. The Centre for Humanitarian Data is exploring ways of increasing the use of data to predict needs and inform evidence-based humanitarian action.

41. A proportion of needs following disasters could be met through insurance, however, on average, only 5 per cent of disaster costs are covered by insurance in developing countries. Regional insurance initiatives are already showing encouraging results. Four countries hit by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria paid into a parametric insurance scheme to protect them from disaster impacts and received payouts of over $55 million from the Caribbean Catastrophic Risk Insurance Facility. Since 2015, the Africa Risk Capacity Insurance Company Limited, affiliated with the African Union, has paid out a total of $36 million to assist 2 million people as part of drought response in Malawi, Mauritania, the Niger and Senegal. The related Africa Risk Capacity Replica initiative, which has been piloted by WFP in Mali and Mauritania, will cover an additional 240,000 people against drought, with a maximum payout of $13.3 million. Public-private partnerships, such as the Insurance Development Forum and the InsuResilience Global Partnership for Climate and Disaster Risk Finance and Insurance Solutions, complemented by micro-insurance initiatives such as the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative of WFP, can help to extend insurance in order to build resilience in communities exposed to climate-related risks.

42. More work is needed to identify and understand the incentives and interests of all stakeholders if forecast-based action is to become standard practice and increase in scale. A change of mindsets is required to accept and adapt to the uncertainty inherent in forecast-based financing and action. Donors and implementing organizations need to invest in the technical expertise and capacities, forecasting and data skills and political leadership required for effective forecast-based action. Humanitarian actors should analyse and identify best practices that are the most promising and have the most potential for scale-up and replication. Successful initiatives should be embedded institutionally, and the range of early actions expanded to achieve a more comprehensive impact. Financing for mechanisms brought to scale should be predictable, sustainable and sufficient.

43. The humanitarian system should also investigate other forms of disaster risk financing, including social and humanitarian impact bonds, and should make better use of private sector expertise. Ultimately, no single innovative financing approach can solve the challenge of increasing disaster risks and impacts or the resulting funding requirements. Various instruments and mechanisms should pool resources and complement each other effectively and efficiently in different contexts in a coherent, transparent and accountable manner. Predictable funding for preparedness, early action and rapid response must be complemented by development and private financing to address the underlying vulnerability and the root causes of disaster risk in order to ensure financing support that is coherent, layered and sequenced. This should include the use of crisis modifiers and tailored financing mechanisms for disaster risk reduction.

F. Enhancing the use of data and technology to improve disaster risk management

44. The Index for Risk Management continued to provide support to countries and organizations using shared open-source risk analysis to build an evidence-based shared understanding of crisis and disaster risk and to assist with decision-making and resource allocation. During 2017, subnational risk models continued to be developed for the Index, covering four regions and five countries. A new model was developed for the Niger, and the Sahel regional model was adapted to help in the development of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel.

45. Launched in December 2017, the Centre for Humanitarian Data is dedicated to increasing the use and impact of data in humanitarian crises. The Centre builds on the

open-data sharing platform known as the Humanitarian Data Exchange, which connects thousands of data sets from more than 360 organizations working to respond to crises around the world. The Centre works to build the data skills of humanitarian workers and provides advice on data policy to humanitarian organizations. The Exchange was used in several disasters in 2017, including Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, monsoon flooding in Bangladesh, flooding in Sierra Leone and an earthquake in Mexico.

46. Geospatial information is an important aspect of disaster risk management and can help to provide an accurate operational picture before, during and after disasters. During disasters, data sharing mechanisms to support decision-making are generally not in place. In 2017, the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management adopted its Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters as a guide for Member States and other stakeholders to ensure the availability and accessibility of quality geospatial information and services across all phases of disaster risk management.

47. Disaster-prone locations are often insufficiently mapped and first responders lack the information to make informed decisions. Missing Maps is an open collaborative project that addresses this challenge by engaging a global community of volunteers and technical experts to use satellite imagery and add information, including available services and facilities for vulnerable and affected people, to data-rich maps to inform and improve preparedness and response activities.

G. Localizing disaster preparedness and response

48. At the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016, calls were made for putting affected people at the centre of humanitarian responses and for building resilience and reinforcing national and local capacities, leadership and systems to prepare for, respond to and recover from crises, with tailored international support founded on complementarity. In 2018, two years since the summit, local partners and affected people are increasingly being recognized and meaningfully engaged, financed and empowered in humanitarian responses. More international partners are shifting from the traditional direct implementation model towards a more collaborative approach that provides greater opportunities for national and local partners to be integral in, and to lead, preparedness and response efforts.

49. A shared vision of the changes required in different contexts is needed to facilitate responses by national and local actors, together with the full, meaningful and effective participation of affected people. The adoption of concrete targets and common definitions can help to translate global commitments and standards into change at the field level. Programming, financing arrangements and decision-making are crucial in incentivizing and enabling community engagement and local action. International and national actors should develop a shared understanding of the capacity-building efforts needed to strengthen national and local leadership and institutions in disaster-prone contexts through sustained multi-year engagement.

50. Effective processes, tools and mechanisms should be in place to ensure the meaningful participation of affected people in the design, monitoring and review of policies and programming for preparedness and response and to increase the accountability of international actors. Stakeholders are increasingly using a human rights-based approach to programming, the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability and the commitments on accountability to affected people of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee as common references for efforts to put affected people at the centre of humanitarian action. The Communications and Community Engagement initiative, established under the auspices of the Communicating with

Disaster Affected Communities Network, is aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian aid through a more systematic and coordinated approach to community engagement throughout the humanitarian programme cycle. The approach provides a more complete picture of people's situations, views, experiences, needs and concerns, ensures consistent messaging and communication, reduces duplication of efforts and avoids overburdening communities with multiple uncoordinated approaches. Data and feedback from affected people and their overall participation will help providers to adjust and improve responses.

51. Funding for national and local actors is increasing, and international actors are exploring ways to further support the localization of aid, including by adapting existing mechanisms to ensure the systematic tracking of funding to national and local actors across the humanitarian system, in line with the commitment of the Grand Bargain to channel at least 25 per cent of humanitarian financing to such actors as directly as possible.

52. Pooled funds have a central role in empowering local responders and capacities. In 2017, the 18 country-based pooled funds managed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs allocated 25 per cent of their total disbursement of $647 million directly to local and national responders. Donors should continue to increase support for pooled funds, identify and address internal restrictions that limit direct funding to national and local actors and provide incentives to recipients of grants to work in partnership with and through national and local responders.

53. Communities are increasingly being recognized and supported as the first line of resilience. The road map to community resilience developed by IFRC, which is currently being rolled out in 12 countries, provides guidance for communities in gaining a better understanding of disaster risk, addressing underlying vulnerabilities and building, scaling up and implementing people-centred and community-led resilience solutions and partnerships. The road map also helps communities to advance the efforts of the One Billion Coalition for Resilience, which connects networks and strengthens resilience solutions at the local level.

H. Disaster displacement

54. In a global context, where the risk of being displaced by disasters has doubled since 1970, the focus must shift to a risk management approach that scales up efforts to prevent disaster displacement by identifying drivers of risk and reducing the vulnerability and exposure of people at risk of displacement.

55. As disasters and the adverse effects of climate change are expected to become more frequent and severe, they will exacerbate other risk drivers such as food insecurity, water scarcity, poverty and rapid and unplanned urbanization, which may further increase the risk of displacement. This is likely to stretch the capacity of local, national, regional and global organizations. Today, preparedness and response capacities to meet current and emerging disaster displacement challenges are generally insufficient. Vulnerable and affected countries and regions should be supported in their efforts to strengthen capacities to prevent, manage and reduce the risk of disaster displacement, including in recovery and reconstruction. Moreover, systematic collaboration across sectors, mandates and areas of expertise is required to manage the disaster displacement risk, address its root causes and ensure coherent and predictable responses.

56. Continued efforts are required to improve data collection and the monitoring of the scale, trends and risks related to disaster displacement. Data on slow-onset events and processes remain scarce and the data that exist are mostly on sudden-onset events and generally not disaggregated by age, gender or duration of displacement. Robust

data are key to understanding and addressing current disaster displacement and future risk. Data should capture displacement over time and by type of movement to distinguish pre-emptive evacuations from spontaneous flight. Without knowing under which conditions people move and for how long they are displaced, disaster displacement cannot be fully understood and countries cannot develop appropriate risk management measures.

57. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction recognizes the link between disasters and displacement. This was emphasized in the outcomes of the fifth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Cancun, Mexico, in May 2017. In the Cancun high-level communiqué the increased likelihood of disaster displacement in conjunction with disaster risk was recognized. The Chair's summary stressed that the development of disaster risk reduction strategies should consider regional and cross-border perspectives and include provisions aimed at preventing displacement attributed to disasters, reducing the displacement risk, addressing the protection needs of displaced people and promoting durable solutions to displacement. The Words into Action guidelines on disaster displacement support the implementation of the Sendai Framework and assist in addressing disaster displacement through disaster risk management measures.

58. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration addresses underlying disaster displacement risk factors with a range of actions, policy instruments and best practices for States to consider using to minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin, including in the context of natural disasters, the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation. Actions include the integration of displacement considerations into disaster preparedness strategies, the development of adaptation and resilience strategies and coherent approaches to address the challenges of migration movements, taking into consideration relevant recommendations from processes such as the Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change and the Platform on Disaster Displacement. Other relevant actions include: developing or building on existing national and regional practices for admission and stay that are of an appropriate duration for migrants compelled to leave their countries of origin; cooperating to identify, develop and strengthen solutions for migrants; and ensuring access to humanitarian assistance that meets the essential needs of migrants, with full respect for their rights.

59. The proposed global compact on refugees recognizes that the climate, environmental degradation and natural disasters increasingly interact with the drivers of refugee movements. The compact emphasizes the need for stakeholders with relevant mandates, roles and expertise to build on operational partnerships to ensure a coordinated approach and provide guidance and support for measures to assist persons displaced by disasters, taking into account national laws and regional instruments, as applicable, as well as practices such as temporary protection and humanitarian stay arrangements.

60. The Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, was mandated by the Conference of the Parties at its twenty-first session, held in Paris in 2015, to establish a task force to develop recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change. Since its creation, the Task Force on Displacement has mapped, analysed and studied existing policies, tools, practices and data related to displacement in the context of sudden- and slow-onset disasters and long-term environmental and climate change. The final recommendations for integrated approaches on the basis of good practices and lessons

learned in addressing key legal, policy and institutional challenges will be included in a report to be submitted to the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties, which is to be held in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018.

61. Disaster displacement creates multidimensional challenges in the field of humanitarian action, development assistance and human rights. The Human Rights Council, in its resolution 35/20 on human rights and climate change, adopted at its thirty-fifth session in June 2017, recognized the human rights implications of climate change on migrants and persons displaced across international borders in the context of the adverse impacts of climate change as well as the urgency of protecting and promoting their human rights. In his follow-up report (A/HRC/38/21), the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights called for, inter alia: the protection and fulfilment of all human rights for persons crossing borders in the context of climate change; the establishment of safe, regular, dignified and accessible pathways for human mobility; the implementation and financing of adaptation measures that benefit the most vulnerable, facilitate safe and voluntary movement and minimize forced movement, including through strengthened social protection systems; and facilitation of the integration of climate change-related migrants in host communities, the regularization of their legal status and their access to labour markets.

62. As most disaster displacement takes place within countries, the implementation of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement is key to reducing and resolving it through prevention, protection and solutions for internally displaced persons. The twentieth anniversary of the Guiding Principles presents an opportunity to strengthen such strategies. If cross-border disaster displacement cannot be prevented or avoided, States and other stakeholders should consider the use of different humanitarian protection measures and other types of protection and migration tools and practices, and the scaling-up, replication and application of such measures, tools and practices more systematically and predictably.

63. The Platform on Disaster Displacement continued to implement the Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change, which offers a consolidated set of practices and policy options on ways of preventing, preparing for and addressing internal and cross-border displacement in the context of disasters and the adverse effects of climate change, and of more effectively protecting and assisting persons displaced in these contexts. Among recent achievements in enhancing the use of effective practices at the regional level, the Platform organized a training activity in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration to disseminate the guide on effective practices for member countries of the Regional Conference on Migration in North and Central America and supported Costa Rica and Panama in organizing a simulation exercise that tested standard operating procedures for preparing protective and assistance mechanisms and joint responses to situations of cross-border disaster displacement. On the basis of the encouraging results and progress in the region, a guide on admission and stay is being developed for the South American Conference on Migration. Work is also under way with support from the International Organization for Migration to promote regional policy dialogue and capacity-building for action regarding climate change and human mobility in different regions, such as in the Pacific, and within the work of the South American Conference on Migration and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. In follow-up to the Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action, aimed at upholding international and regional standards and ending statelessness in the Latin America and Caribbean region, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is leading a study of national and regional laws, policies and practices to gain a better understanding of, and to address, cross-border displacement challenges in the context of disasters and climate change in the region.

I. Gender and disasters

64. Gender-responsive and transformative programming is crucial for effective disaster preparedness, response and recovery. Significant progress has been made in integrating gender into humanitarian action, a critical element in addressing the different experiences, views, needs, risk exposure and vulnerabilities of women, girls, boys and men, and to identify those most at risk of marginalization.

65. To advance the systematic integration of a gender perspective into preparedness, response and recovery mechanisms to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee has strengthened system-wide approaches and guidance. In its Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Action, the Committee sets out principles, standards and actions for integration into humanitarian action. Its Gender with Age Marker provides a diagnostic tool to address gender and age in programming, including as part of the Financial Tracking Service, while its updated Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action provides practical guidance for promoting gender equality across sectors, especially in protection programming.

66. In 2017, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) supported 13 countries in developing gender-responsive disaster policy frameworks. Through the application of its minimum standard commitments to gender and diversity in emergency programming, IFRC supported 54 national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies in integrating gender and diversity approaches into their disaster response activities. In addition, IFRC is promoting the development of gender-responsive laws and policies on disaster risk reduction and protection from sexual and gender-based violence in disasters.

67. In March 2018, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women adopted its general recommendation No. 37 on gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change. The recommendation provides guidance on the application of related norms and obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and contributes to coherence, accountability and the mutual reinforcement of various international frameworks governing disaster risk reduction, climate change, humanitarian assistance and sustainable development. Governments and other stakeholders should refer to the recommendation for guidance to ensure that policies and actions comply with commitments under those frameworks and international human rights law.

J. Strengthening the resilience of persons with disabilities

68. Persons with disabilities are among the most marginalized in disaster-affected communities. While they share the same basic needs as all affected people and require the same essential humanitarian assistance, they have additional requirements concerning access, protection and other aspects of response. Their skills and capacities represent a wealth of knowledge and expertise, which are routinely overlooked.

69. Strengthening the inclusion of persons with disabilities of all ages, genders and types of impairment, including mental health and psychosocial disabilities, in humanitarian action and development assistance is a prerequisite for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the central commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind and ensure dignity and human rights for all. In line with the Sendai Framework, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in

Humanitarian Action, disaster risk management and humanitarian action should systematically encompass persons with disabilities as active stakeholders, including by removing barriers to their full participation, advancing inclusive policies, responses and services, ensuring that "building back better" improves accessibility and collecting disaggregated data on disability. At the Global Summit on Disability, held in London in July 2018, the global effort was galvanized and new commitments and deliverables were mobilized to address disability inclusion as part of humanitarian action and development assistance.

70. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee is developing system-wide guidelines on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action, which are to be finalized by the end of 2018. The guidelines will assist humanitarian actors, Governments and affected communities in undertaking essential actions that foster the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action to ensure the full, effective and meaningful participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities across sectors and in all phases of humanitarian action.

III. Recommendations

71. **On the basis of the present report, the Secretary-General recommends that Member States, the United Nations, humanitarian and development organizations and other relevant stakeholders:**

(a) **Continue to strengthen disaster preparedness, response and recovery capacities at all levels, including by establishing and strengthening policies, plans, institutions and financial and monitoring mechanisms;**

(b) **Strengthen efforts to anticipate, prevent and respond to food insecurity in the context of disasters, including by advancing humanitarian and development collaboration and investing in agriculture to protect livelihoods and food production and in health systems; ensure a more comprehensive and coordinated response to achieve collective outcomes for food security and nutrition; address the underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition, including through productive support and social protection; build resilient and sustainable livelihoods in rural and urban areas; reinforce health systems; strengthen disaster risk monitoring, early warning systems and early action; and support sustainable food systems through inclusive policy processes, including through the participation of local communities, and effective partnerships;**

(c) **Develop and enhance the use of shock-responsive social protection systems that prevent and mitigate shocks, facilitate responses and strengthen livelihoods, resilience and recovery, as well as the use of humanitarian approaches, including cash-based transfers and complementary livelihood support, to contribute to the rebuilding of sustainable social and livelihood systems;**

(d) **Continue to support humanitarian and development collaboration, including the articulation and operationalization of collective outcomes to reduce need, risk and vulnerability;**

(e) **Strengthen anticipatory financing mechanisms and approaches and improve the use of data, predictive analysis, early warning systems, forecasts, context-specific triggers, protocols and pre-agreed plans to enhance decision-making and the effectiveness, efficiency, predictability, timeliness, coherence, complementarity, flexibility and scale of anticipatory and forecast-based financing for preparedness, early action and rapid response in order to reduce the impact of disasters and humanitarian needs, complemented by financing and**

programming to address the underlying vulnerability and root causes of disaster risk and to ensure that financing support is coherent, layered and sequenced;

(f) Increase contributions to country-based pooled funds in support of humanitarian response plans;

(g) Continue to invest in reliable and timely data, geospatial information services and open-source risk analysis to strengthen the evidence-based shared understanding of disaster risk and impacts and work to improve efficiencies in how data is collected, shared and used;

(h) Increase efforts to engage the private sector, including small and medium-sized enterprises, through strategic partnerships in disaster risk management activities and continue to develop tools to support private sector engagement in humanitarian action;

(i) Remove barriers that hinder collaboration between international, national, local and regional actors with a view to reinforcing and not replacing the capacities of local actors and institutions, including by complementing and reinforcing national coordination mechanisms, engaging local actors in international coordination mechanisms and providing financing to national and local responders as directly as possible;

(j) Continue to implement community engagement approaches through which communities receive timely information and have access to complaint and feedback mechanisms that improve the targeting of humanitarian assistance;

(k) Strengthen coherent approaches and financing to manage disaster displacement risk and address its root causes;

(l) Incorporate the systematic collection and reporting of data on disaster displacement and durable solutions in disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and humanitarian response plans and strategies;

(m) Implement the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, including by minimizing the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin in the context of natural disasters, the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation, using available policy tools and guidance and building on existing partnerships;

(n) Support the work of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to implement recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse effects of climate change;

(o) Continue to advance the systematic integration of a gender perspective into preparedness, response and recovery activities in order to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian action, with programming responsive to the different and context-specific needs and vulnerabilities of affected people, including by ensuring the systematic collection, analysis and use of data disaggregated by sex, age and disability, and by prioritizing gender-responsive programming and the use of the Gender with Age Marker of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee;

(p) Translate policies and guidelines on including persons with disabilities into practice and ensure that systematic approaches to inclusive humanitarian action do not neglect persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.